

Message Text

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SUBJ: MOOD OF MOSCOW JEWISH ACTIVISTS

1. FOLLOWING IS BASED ON NUMBER OF CONVERSATIONS WITH KNOWLEDGEABLE MOSCOW JEWISH SOURCES OVER PAST SEVERAL WEEKS.

2. AS PRESIDENT'S VISIT APPROACHES, ACTIVISTS ARE HOPEFUL, WITHOUT BEING OVERLY OPTIMISTIC, THAT REGIME WILL SOON MAKE SOME KIND OF GESTURE IN AREA OF JEWISH EMIGRATION. IN FACT, A GOOD NUMBER OF INTELLECTUALS WHO HAVE APPLIED TO LEAVE HOLD THE OPINION THAT THE VISIT MAY BE THEIR LAST OPPORTUNITY FOR SOME TIME TO RECEIVE EXIT PERMISSION. MANY SEEM TO FEAR, HOWEVER, THAT A DEAL WILL BE STRUCK WHICH FOCUSES EXCLUSIVELY ON NUMBERS RATHER THAN ON INDIVIDUAL CASES, OR A COMBINATION OF THE TWO. SUCH A DEAL, THEY FEEL, WOULD LEAVE MANY SOVIET JEWISH INTELLECTUALS OUT IN THE COLD, FOR THEY BELIEVE THE REGIME WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE ITS FINGER OUT OF THE DIKE AND ALLOW THOUSANDS OF JEWS FROM NON-URBAN AREAS TO EMIGRATE WHILE HOLDING BACK ON EMIGRATION OF EDUCATED URBAN

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JEWISH POPULATION.

3. WITH REGARD TO LATTER GROUP, ACTIVISTS HAVE SEEN FEW INDICATIONS THUS FAR OF MUCH MOVEMENT. THEY PUT THE PANOVS IN QUITE A DIFFERENT CATEGORY, AND ARE CONCERNED THAT AUTHORITIES MAY CONSIDER PANOVS' EMIGRATION, PERHAPS COUPLED WITH SLIGHT RISE IN EMIGRATION RATE, AS SUFFICIENT GESTURE TO MAKE IN CONNECTION WITH PRESIDENTIAL VISIT. ACTIVISTS SAY THAT AUTHORITIES HAVE IN FACT TIGHTENED CONTROLS OVER THEM; MORE TELEPHONES HAVE BEEN REMOVED, FEWER LETTERS THAN EVER FROM WEST ARE GETTING THROUGH, AND A NUMBER HAVE BEEN CALLED IN BY AUTHORITIES TO BE WARNED ABOUT THEIR ACTIVITIES. WHILE LATTER APPARENTLY HAS HAD MORE STICK IN IT THAN CARROT, SEVERAL ACTIVISTS SAY THEY WERE GIVEN HINT THAT LESSENERED ACTIVITY COULD BRING FAVORABLE ACTION IN THEIR CASES.

4. IN GENERAL, ACTIVISTS FEEL THAT OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN TO DISCOURAGE EMIGRATION HAS HAD MINIMAL EFFECT ON BOTH URBAN AND RURAL JEWS. WHILE SOME SAY THAT OVERALL EMIGRATION POOL MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED, THEY BELIEVE THAT NUMBER OF PROSPECTIVE EMIGRANTS IS STILL IN THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS. THEY ARE GENERALLY OF OPINION THAT SLOWDOWN IN RATE OF EMIGRATION IS A PURPOSEFUL ACTION TAKEN BY REGIME TO SHOW THAT LACK OF PAYOFF FROM U.S. FOR PREVIOUS "LIBERAL" EMIGRATION POLICY CAN CAUSE THAT POLICY TO CHANGE. ACTIVIST OBSERVERS DO NOT THINK THAT REGIME FEELS IT HAS TO BE CONSISTENT AND BELIEVE THAT THE ARGUMENT IT IS BUILDING--THAT DESIRE AMONG JEWS TO EMIGRATE IS DWINDLING--WOULD BE EASILY CAST ASIDE IF AND WHEN TIME SEEMS RIGHT TO DO SO. SOME ACTIVISTS HAVE EXPRESSED OPINION, HOWEVER, THAT BREZHNEV AND OTHER LEADERS INTERESTED IN PURSUING DETENTE POLICIES ARE POSSIBLY BEING MISLED ON THIS QUESTION BY "HAWKS" IN THE LEADERSHIP AND THEIR SUPPORTERS FURTHER DOWN IN THE BUREAUARCRCY.

5. BECAUSE OF GENERAL JEWISH EMIGRATION SLOWDOWN AND, ACCORDING TO ACTIVISTS, EVEN GREATER SLOWDOWN IN RATE OF ISSURANCE OF VISAS TO JEWISH INTELLECTUALS, SOME CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTIVISITS HAVE BEGUN TO RETHINK PREVIOUS POSITIONS ON JACKSON AMENDMENT AND ACTIVITIES OF U.S. JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS. WHEREAS LAST FALL ONE WOULD HAVE FOUND NEARLY UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FOR JACKSON FORMULA AMONG MOSCOW JEWISH INTELLECTUALS, MANY NOW SEEM TO SEE IT IN ITS EXTREME FORM AS A DEADEND. SOME HAVE APPARENTLY BEGUN TO DOUBT EARLIER WIDESPREAD VIEW THAT REGIME WOULD DO ANYTHING TO GAIN MOST FAVORED NATION TREATMENT,

WESTERN CREDITS AND ACCESS TO WESTERN TECHNOLOGY. SOME ARE NOW SAYING THAT TALK OF FREE EMIGRATION FROM SOVIET UNION IS ABSURD AND THAT SUCH PROVISIONS MIGHT BE MORE EFFECTIVE IF LIMITED TO PEOPLES HAVING A NATIONAL HOMELAND OUTSIDE THE USSR (I.E., ESSENTIALLY JEWS AND ETHNIC GERMANS). SOME ALSO REFER TO FORMULAS INCORPORATING IDEA THAT SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN EMIGRATION MUST BE SHOWN BY SOVIETS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN TRADE AND CREDIT BENEFITS, ALONG WITH PERIODIC REVIEW BY U.S. CONGRESS. (IT IS ASSUMED THAT THERE IS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION WITH AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS ON THIS ISSUE--THROUGH TOURISTS, LETTERS, TELEPHONE CALLS.)

6. COMMENT: BECAUSE OF EFFECT ACTIVITIES OF RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER (PROBABLY SEVERAL HUNDRED) OF SOVIET ACTIVIST JEWS CAN HAVE ON U.S. PUBLIC OPINION IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THEIR PSYCHOLOGY AT THE PRESENT TIME. THEY FEEL THEMSELVES IN A DESPERATE SITUATION; HAVING APPLIED FOR EMIGRATION THEY HAVE BURNED THEIR BRIDGES BEHIND THEM AND SEE ABSOLUTELY NO FUTURE FOR THEMSELVES OR THEIR FAMILIES IN SOVIET SOVIETY. THEY ALSO CONSIDER THEMSELVES "HOSTAGES" TO CURRENT POLICIES OF SOVIET REGIME IN THE AREA OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS. AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, THEY OFTEN SEEM MORE CONCERNED WITH THEIR OWN FATE THAN WITH THE FATE OF NON-ACTIVIST JEWS WHO ALSO WANT TO EMIGRATE. FROM THEIR STANDPOINT, THEY SEE NOTHING WRONG WITH ACTING AS IRRITANTS IN THE DETENTE PROCESS AND ARE PREPARED TO GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO ADVANCE THEIR CAUSE. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT THEY WILL BE SORELY DISAPPOINTED IF SOME FAVORABLE ACTION ON THEIR CASES IS NOT TAKEN BY THE REGIME IN CONNECTION WITH THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT, AND IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THEY WOULD INCREASE THEIR ACTIVITIES IN SUCH A CASE.

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